FLASH: The Wobble Before Time

by Jonathan Olvera

Barry Allen was only eleven years old when the land beneath his feet—just a patch of dirt in the wide American plains—began to change. It wasn't just the land. It was the air. The wind. The sun.

It was the **world** itself.

Barry had always felt connected to this piece of land behind the old fence post. His mother called it "just a dry patch," but Barry knew it had personality. He swore it hummed in summer, curled like a sleeping animal in the cold, and whispered when no one else was around. But on that day, it became something else entirely.

A different kind of heat touched his face. A thin breeze spun around him, warm and circular. The clouds didn't move, but the sky shimmered. And the earth...

The **earth shook.**

A tremor, not sharp or loud—but rolling, like a giant beneath the soil was adjusting in its sleep. A perfect oval of land, right where Barry stood, rose just a few inches.

"**Whoa!**" Barry shouted, stumbling back, eyes wide.

It was like the ground had breathed. He crouched to touch it. The soil felt hot, then cold, then suddenly moist, as if drenched in unseen rain. Static crackled through the weeds and into Barry's hands.

–Flash!
–Snap!
–Crack!
–Flash!

A brilliant white bolt arced into the sky. No thunder followed. Just silence. Then another tremor—softer this time.

"**Oh wow!**" Barry gasped, grinning now.
"**I am so lucky!**"

He didn't understand how rare this was.

Above him, beyond Earth's magnetosphere, a delicate dance had just ended: the sun had completed a micro-wobble, a gravitational tug that subtly shifted its axial field. These weren't events recorded by school textbooks. This was an ancient astronomical anomaly—one that disturbed the silence of space.

And someone had noticed.

From a distant quadrant of the galaxy, nestled near the remains of a red supergiant, a crystalline planet pulsed with awareness.

Krypton.

Within its glistening halls, an alarm whispered across thousands of sensor-stones. Guardians—cloaked in robes of interwoven metals and minerals—gathered around their observatory crystals. Dozens of them stood motionless, hands hovering above holographic rings made of refracted starlight.

They reviewed the anomaly.

“This subject... is Barry Allen,” said Guardian One.

“He’s a young human specimen,” confirmed Guardian Two.

“He is witness to a rare phenomenon,” added Guardian Three.

The transmission from Earth had been faint, but observable through the multi-spectrum array: a point of energy in the center of the Earth’s plains—raw, pulsing, **interactive**.

A living response to a cosmic signal.

The Guardians turned to their trusted scout. Cloaked in stillness, eyes soft yet powerful—stood the Martian survivor known as **J’onn J’onzz**, the **Martian Manhunter**.

He bowed, silent.

“Martian Manhunter, prepare yourself,” said Guardian One.
“This subject will be for you to observe,” said Guardian Two.
“We will name him *The Flash*,” said Guardian Three. “As it is what we came to observe.”

The crystalline board beneath them lit up in a whirl of shifting codes.

“Load a crystal,” ordered Guardian Two.
“Prepare the genome board,” added Guardian One.
“Flash the scene. Boot the program into the Earth subject. This Flash must remain visible from Krypton at all times.”

The crystalline matrix formed a spiral, and the pulse was sent. Not through space—but through **time**.

Back on Earth, Barry leaned closer to the lot. He had to know what had changed. He reached down...

–Flash!
–Snap!
–Crack!

The air froze. Everything around him—birds, insects, the rolling wind—paused in place, suspended in a strange shimmer.

An orb emerged. It hovered silently before him, casting a pale glow that bent the sunlight. From within, a spark of movement—alien and beautiful.

The orb burst with light—and Barry fell.

His vision blurred. His limbs twitched. He lay flat on the raised plot, but something **was happening** to him. Not like pain—like... transformation.

Light moved around him, not just on the outside but within. It was like a **program**—something being installed.

The Kryptonian signal had found its target.

The orb transmitted a lattice of crystalline code, an encoded sequence birthed in the Kryptonian archives—originally meant to preserve memory, history, time. But now, it was altering Barry Allen’s body.

He didn’t scream. He breathed.

Slow. Calm. Transfixed.

Then, rising like a phantom, Barry stood. His eyes no longer blinked at human speed. He saw patterns in the air. Magnetic fields arched across the plains like rivers of neon. Every gust of wind moved with intention. The grass bent in calculated angles.

He stared at his hands, turned them over. Sparks flickered across his fingertips.

And then—

He *moved*.

Not walked. Not ran. Moved—across the lot in a blink. He had traveled twenty yards and back before his shadow caught up.

His mouth opened slightly.

> *"This is a gift. But it is also a key. Use it well."*

He heard the voice inside his chest.

Still Earth. Still sky.

But now he could see **time**. Not in moments or memories—but in spirals, probabilities, and lines. Every tree, every cloud cast shadows not just on the ground—but across **futures**.

The plot had awakened something within him—and something ancient outside him had responded.

In Krypton's temple, the Guardians watched.

"Program loaded," said Guardian One.
"Martian Manhunter will observe," said Guardian Two.
"And the Flash… will remember," finished Guardian Three.

Barry stood alone in the silence. The orb had vanished. The ground had stopped shaking. The temperature returned to normal.

But **he** had changed.

He tapped his wrist again. Raised a finger to his ear. Checked his eyes, his brow, his knees. Still himself. Still flesh and bone.

But something… new pulsed in him.

He saw it when he looked around. The prism of energy above the horizon. The bending lattice of electrical arcs in the sky. The pull of time like a rubber band.

He could step into it.

With a thought, Barry vanished. Then reappeared. Then again. Then three versions of him blinked into place—each showing a second of movement ahead, behind, and sideways. Time **rippled** around him.

This was real.

He dropped to his knees and dug into the dirt—his hands moving faster than he realized. He found rock, root, iron shard, a fossil—all in under a breath.

And then he smiled.

The Flash wasn't just a title. It was a **destiny**.

Above Earth, J'onn J'onzz stood alone in his craft, watching the boy. A faint sadness played across his green features.

> "He has the gift," he whispered to himself.
> "And the burden."

From behind him, the Guardians' voices echoed through the transmission crystal.

> "Watch him, J'onn. He may be our link."
> "Observe the anomaly. Protect the subject."
> "We have no knowledge of what this Flash may become."

J'onn nodded.

“I will stay close.”

Barry Allen ran again—across the lot, across the wind, across a **moment** he didn’t yet understand.

But even then, somewhere in the swirl of probability and lightning, he felt it:

He would never be just a boy again.

He had been **seen**, encoded, and named.

And now he could run.

Faster than thought.

Faster than light.

Faster than **time**.